

# Eye on the Sky

Autumn/Winter 2005-2006

Volume 6, Issue 2

## New Forecaster Arrives



by **Angela Lese,**  
**Forecaster**

Hello to everyone in southern Indiana and central Kentucky! I am the newest forecaster at the National Weather Service office in Louisville, having arrived here in

May after working at the Springfield, Missouri office. I'm happy to be here, and I've only heard great things about the region.

I'm originally from northern Indiana. I was born in Elkhart, near the Michigan border, in 1979. My family moved to Fort Wayne, Indiana, when I was almost three years old, and I lived there for most of my life, so that is what I consider home.

Growing up in north-

ern Indiana I witnessed some unique weather events. It seemed like every spring brought tornadoes, which, being a weather junkie, was very exciting. However, I definitely enjoyed the winters which usually brought enough snow to cancel school so that I could go sledding with friends!

From lake-effect snow to tornadic storms, I knew as a child that I

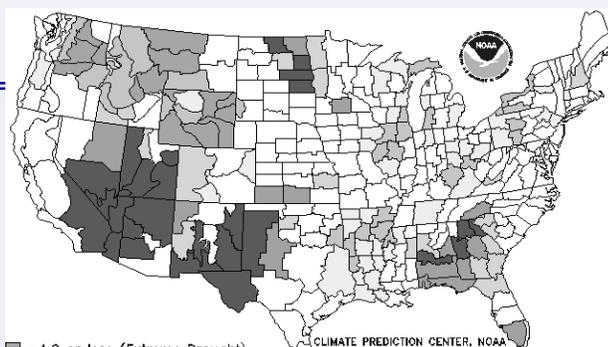
**Continued on Page 6,**  
**"New Forecaster"**



## Drought Strikes the Region

by **Mike Callahan,**  
**Hydrologist**

Drought conditions were firmly established over most of Kentucky by mid-August. The hardest-hit areas were in the North Central and Blue Grass regions of the Commonwealth. Using the Palmer Index of Drought Severity, these areas reached



■ -4.0 or less (Extreme Drought)      □ +2.0 to +2.9 (Unusual Moist Spell)  
 ■ -3.0 to -3.9 (Severe Drought)      □ +3.0 to +3.9 (Very Moist Spell)  
 □ -2.0 to -2.9 (Moderate Drought)      ■ +4.0 and above (Extremely Moist)  
 □ -1.9 to +1.9 (Near Normal)

Palmer Drought Severity Index, August 20, 2005

Story continued on Page 6, "Drought"

### Inside this issue:

New Forecaster	1
Drought Strikes	1
Spring 2005 Review	2
Leadership Unleashed	3
Changing Tomorrow	4
Louisville Science Center	5
Weather Posters	5
Office Happenings	8-10

## Spring 2005 Review

by John Denman,  
Forecaster

The spring of 2005, in contrast to the two previous years across southern Indiana and central Kentucky, featured below normal rainfall and a paucity of severe weather.

March, April, and May of 2005 were significantly drier than the wet springs of the last three years. To the right is a chart comparing rainfall at Louisville, Lexington, and Bowling Green to the previous three years.

Tornadic activity was minimal this spring. Only two very small, weak tornadoes were noted across our area. Our first tornado, with winds estimated around 70 m.p.h., damaged the roof of a general store and an outbuilding east of Taylorsville in Spencer County. The second tornado was on the ground for a few blocks on the east side of downtown Louisville April 22 (see picture above). It damaged a roof, snapped a telephone pole, and flipped over a trailer.

Temperatures this spring were generally below normal (see table at right

Continued on Page 10,  
"Spring"



Brief weak tornado spin-up in downtown Louisville April 22, 2005

Spring Rainfall			
	Louisville	Lexington	Bowling Green
<b>2005</b>	11.97"	9.60"	11.77"
<b>2004</b>	20.95"	18.96"	17.97"
<b>2003</b>	15.97"	14.89"	12.33"
<b>2002</b>	22.07"	17.15"	18.63"
<b>Normal</b>	13.20"	12.86"	14.32"

Spring Temperature			
	Louisville	Lexington	Bowling Green
<b>March</b>	41.6 (-5.3)	40.6 (-5)	44.6 (-3.2)
<b>April</b>	57.5 (+.7)	56.3 (+1.7)	57.5 (+.7)
<b>May</b>	63.2 (-2.6)	61.5 (-2.3)	63.2 (-2.6)

Spring Record Lows		
Site	New Record and Date	Old Record and Year set
<b>Louisville</b>	33 (tie), April 24	33, 1927
<b>Lexington</b>	32, May 3	33, 1971
<b>Louisville</b>	34, May 3	35, 1961
<b>Bowling Green</b>	34 (tie), May 3	34, 1895

## Leadership Unleashed!

by Ted Funk,  
Science and Operations Officer

How is leadership defined? What makes a person an excellent leader? Can anyone be a leader or are leaders mainly those people in supervisory or management positions? Why is effective leadership so crucial to an organization?

The answers to these and similar questions can separate highly effective, passionate, and successful individuals and organizations from those who may be less motivated, less driven, less visionary, or are reactive in nature versus proactive to external stimuli and inevitable change. Effective leadership and leadership training are extremely important within the National Weather Service (NWS), including NWS Louisville as discussed below.

First, let's examine the qualities of leadership. All of us demonstrate leadership in our lives and work at least occasionally or situationally. But what kind of true leaders are we, and how does this affect our beliefs, values, behaviors, interaction with others, and ultimately our performance and success on the job, both individually and collectively as an organization?

**Webster's Dictionary defines a leader as a guide, conductor, commander, captain, or director. A *real* leader demonstrates the following characteristics routinely, not just situationally**

- Influence others to think, feel, and take positive action to achieve goals
- Focuses on values, and establishes direction and a shared vision of the future
- Demonstrates and demands initiative, creativity, and calculated risk-taking to establish and implement new ideas, to think and work differently than before
- Effectively leads through change, challenges, and opportunities
- Takes responsibility for his/her actions and decisions, and can admit mistakes
- Builds trust through honesty
- Is accessible and approachable
- Is a good communicator and listener
- Possess excellent "people skills"
- Is optimistic, passionate, decisive, and has courage in his/her convictions
- Learns from and supports others (servant leadership)
- Respects others' opinions and values
- Leads by example; follows through on promised actions
- Consults with others in problem solving and decision making
- Empowers others to be their best by matching individual values and interest with organizational needs
- Embraces diversity and individual talents to produce a synergistic team effect
- Uses power wisely

Continued on Page 7, "Leadership"

## Changing Tomorrow Today

by Pam Lozier,  
Administrative Support  
Assistant

Hello weather friends! I hope everyone had a terrific summer as we now approach the cooler autumn season. In this edition of the office newsletter, I decided to talk about changes taking place at the Louisville National Weather Service office. We now have many weather pictures and informational posters hanging on newly painted walls, and a tornado simulator which fascinates weather enthusiasts.

We were very fortunate this summer to have three female college students who worked and volunteered at our office,

including Sarah Ede and Samantha Osborne from Western Kentucky University and Andrea Lambers from Indiana University. The students received enhanced opportunities such as participation in forecast operations, research, special projects, and scientific training. The staff gained the ultimate reward of investing in the future growth and diversity of the meteorology profession.

As society advances with equality recognition in areas of technology, I think women's progress in obtaining scientific and environmental positions in technical careers will balance the gender differences in these fields. It is

very important to educate young people about the opportunities which exist in science and technology. Mentors can influence students greatly and make a tremendous impact on their career planning and goals. Student Sarah Ede stated, "This opportunity went beyond my expectations; the knowledge, self-confidence, and friendships gained made this one of my happiest summers. There is a lack of women working in math, science, and technology careers." Serving as a mentor, we can change young people's lives; they need to know they can achieve any career goals they set.

The National Weather Service, including the Louisville office, continues to expand ways to reach our customers and partners on weather education and outreach programs. We also participate in the Combined Federal Campaign, where each year our staff donates thousands of dollars to numerous charities in the area. I believe that one organization, one office, and even just one person can make a difference today which will change tomorrow for the better.

**Once upon a time there was a wise man who used to go to the ocean to do his writing. One day he was walking along the shore. As he looked down the beach, he saw a human figure moving like a dancer. He smiled to himself thinking that someone was dancing on the beach. So he began to walk faster to catch up with this person. As he got closer he saw that it was a young woman and she wasn't dancing, but instead was reaching down and picking something up and very gently throwing it into the ocean. As he got even closer, he called out, "Good morning, what are you doing?" The young woman paused, looked up and replied, "Throwing starfish back into the ocean." He asked, "Why are you throwing starfish into the ocean?" She replied, "The sun is up and the tide is going out. If I don't throw them back in, they will die." The man was intrigued and stated, "But, young lady, don't you realize that there are miles and miles of beach and starfish are all along it. You can't possibly make a difference!" She listened politely, then bent down, picked up another starfish and threw it back into the sea past the breaking waves. As she did, she said, "It made a difference for that one"**

Author Unknown

## Weather Awareness Booth at the Louisville Science Center

by Sarah Ede and Andrea Lammers, students

On July 15 and 16, 2005, Sarah Ede, Andrea Lammers, and summer volunteer Samantha Osborne of the NWS office in Louisville manned a weather awareness booth at the Louisville Science Center to go along with the IMAX film *Forces of Nature*. The event was a great success with about 1400

people visiting the booth. The weather office's own five foot tall tornado machine was a big hit with both children and adults. Three historical weather posters were displayed: the Great Flood of 1937, the Super Tornado Outbreak of April 3, 1974, and the Winter Storm of 2004. Many people commented on the posters and gave their own personal recollections of the

events. In relation to these dangerous weather events, the role of the National Weather Service in alerting the public when hazardous weather strikes was stressed. Perhaps the most significant piece of information museum-goers gained from our booth at the Science Center was the importance of weather awareness in their own homes and communities.



Summer students Sarah Ede (L) and Andrea Lammers (R) staff the NWS booth at the Louisville Science Center July 15 and 16, 2005

## Historical Weather Posters

by Sarah Ede and Andrea Lammers, students

This summer John Denman, a Forecaster here at the Louisville NWS office, and summer students Sarah Ede and Andrea Lammers were hard at work designing three significant historical weather posters: the Great Flood of 1937, the 1974 Tornado Super Outbreak, and the Winter Storm of 2004. These posters will be used to educate the public on these historical weather events. They will also hang on the wall at the Louisville National Weather Service office to show tour groups and other visitors when they visit the office. Further-

more, the posters will be taken to office outreach programs to remind the public about the significance of these weather events, and as a reminder that hazardous weather will strike again.

The posters will be presented at the National Weather Association's national conference Octo-

ber 15—20, 2005, in St. Louis, Missouri. Andrea and Sarah will present the poster-making process at the conference so other offices and educational institutions can benefit by creating their own historical weather posters.

We plan on creating more posters in the future.



## New Forecaster, continued from Page 1

wanted to work with weather. However, it did not start out that way at all.

Having played the flute for eight years, once I graduated from high school I attended the University of Indianapolis as a music major. Then, I transferred to Purdue University as a meteorology major and received my Bachelor's and Master's degrees there. While at graduate school, I worked for the Northern Indiana National Weather Service office during the summer. Once I graduated from Purdue, I moved to Springfield, Missouri in January of

2004 to begin my National Weather Service career.

Springfield was a great location at which to start out in the NWS, but I wanted to get closer to my family and friends. Also, larger cities appeal to me more, so as soon as the job in Louisville opened up, I was fortunate enough to get transferred.

At the Louisville office I'm part of an excellent staff and am being presented many fascinating opportunities. Currently I am busy with severe local storm research, forecast verification, and NOAA Weather Radio.

Outside of work, I've met some wonderful people and have gotten involved in both volleyball and softball. I also switched from playing the flute to playing the drums. Playing the drums is my favorite hobby, and something I would like to pursue as much as I can. (Anyone interested in forming a band?)

Many thanks to all who have welcomed me to Louisville! I'm excited to be a part of the community. Maybe you'll see me at the drums somewhere...unless there's weather occurring, in which case I'll probably be at work!

## Drought, continued from Page 1

the "severe" category. The rest of central Kentucky was in the "moderate" category. In Indiana the Southeast region was experiencing moderate drought while the South Central section achieved mild drought.

From May to mid-August many locations in the driest parts of the region collected less than six inches of rain, which was merely thirty-five percent of normal. Streamflows were very low and some small streams dried up com-

pletely. The Environmental and Public Protection Cabinet of Kentucky (<http://www.environment.ky.gov/>) issued a water shortage watch over the western two-thirds off the state.

Unfortunately, the outlook for the autumn months is not good. Strong forecasting signals that might suggest a wet autumn are not present, and fall usually includes the region's driest months even in a normal year.

One source of hope for rainfall is that the tropics are expected to be particularly active this season. Hurricanes Katrina and Dennis brought rain to the area. In many years droughts have been broken by the remnants of tropical systems dropping heavy rains on Kentucky and the Ohio Valley. The 2005 drought would have been even worse had it not been for the rains received from the remains of Hurricane Dennis in July.

## Leadership, continued from page 3

Great leadership works through our emotions, ignites our passion, and inspires the best in us. It is a behavior, not a position, which allows a group or agency to change from “what it is” to “what it ought to be”. In a competitive world, there are two basic possibilities: you can lose, or if you want to win, you can change. In other words, if you stop striving to get better you’re bound to get worse, and if you stop being better you’ll stop being good. Leadership also is also about eliminating the “us versus them” syndrome, i.e., a leader cannot choose sides; a much harder task is required. He or she must bring sides and emotions together incorporating diverse beliefs and talents for individual and group benefit.

In examining your leadership abilities, consider ex-UCLA basketball coach John Wooden’s quote: “Don’t measure yourself by what you have accomplished, but by what you should have accomplished with your ability.” Vince Lombardi also said it well: “The quality of a person’s life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence, regardless of their chosen field of endeavor.” In addition, “Excellence is not an act but a habit” stated Aristotle. Gordon Bethune, who led a huge turnaround at Continental Airlines in the 1990’s also noted that “There is no autopilot for success. Don’t stop doing what made you successful.”

In the NWS, quality leadership is critical. Each of us has an important job to do from everyday fore-

casting to warning of hazardous storms to serving the needs of our customers and partners. This takes well-trained, dedicated, and driven individuals to work well as a synergistic team to save lives and property, and serve the community. Change is constant within the NWS with ongoing advances in technology and job responsibilities. Thus, great leadership is essential, not just from the top, but from within all of us and all levels of the organization. We must demonstrate within ourselves the characteristics above in order to move forward with confidence, character, and commitment. There’s always room to improve, but true leaders in our...and your...organization recognize this and are dedicated to doing so.

**Leaders are called to stand in that lonely place between the no longer and the not yet, and intentionally make decisions that will bind, forge, move, and create history. We are not called to be popular, we are not called to be safe, we are not called to follow. We are the ones called to take risks, we are the ones called to change attitudes, to risk displeasures, we are the ones called to gamble our lives for a better world.**

**Mary Lou Anderson, 1970**



(Left) Forecaster Angie Lese hones her leadership skills as she helps a fellow employee master the complexities of operating NOAA Weather Radio.

(Right) Service Hydrologist Mike Callahan is recognized for his leadership in helping standardize the NWS Hydrologic Forecast System



### College Students Gain Valuable Experience

This summer we were very fortunate to have three college students work at our office. This allowed us to accomplish many things for you the taxpayer.

In late May we hired Sarah Ede, a senior at Western Kentucky University, through the Student Temporary Employment Program. Sarah was involved in a variety of activities, including making a poster commemorating the 1974 Tornado Super Outbreak, getting involved with flash flood verification, and providing input to a road department outreach project.

At the same time that Sarah joined the staff, we also welcomed Indiana University senior Andrea Lammers as part of the Student Career Experience Program. Andrea made the four-hour commute from Bloomington, Indiana twice a week to work at the Louisville office. Andrea developed a poster describing the spectacular winter storm that paralyzed much of the region in December 2004, and also did some work on the office's Intranet. This fall, Andrea will continue to show exemplary dedication as she splits her time between both the Louisville and Indianapolis weather offices, all while still going to school at I.U.! When she graduates next August, she will be promoted to an Intern position within the National Weather Service.

Samantha Osborne, a senior at Western Kentucky University, began volunteering at the Louisville office in July and quickly got involved with summer heat awareness issues.

All three summer students were able to spend several shifts observing the operations of the office, benefiting from the many years of combined experience and knowledge of the NWS Louisville meteorologists.



Sarah Ede



Andrea Lammers



Samantha Osborne

### Hazardous Weather Outlook

We now issue Hazardous Weather Outlooks routinely at 4:30 am EDT and 11:30 am EDT, with updates as needed. You can see them on-line at [http://www.crh.noaa.gov/lmk/php/display\\_product.php?title=Hazardous+Weather+Outlook&product=HWOLMK](http://www.crh.noaa.gov/lmk/php/display_product.php?title=Hazardous+Weather+Outlook&product=HWOLMK) . We also have a graphical version at <http://www.crh.noaa.gov/lmk/ghwo/index.php> .



### Maximizing Efficiency

In April a five-member team redesigned the operations layout of the office, to maximize communication among the forecasters, especially during severe weather. In May the new layout was put into use as the electronics staff worked diligently to move equipment, communication lines, and furniture.

### Office Beautification

Data Acquisition Program Manager Larry Dattilo planted two new trees in front of the office and built a picnic table for use during office functions.

We also had Office Beautification Day on June 9. Our mail room was completely overhauled with new shelving, new mailboxes, and a new paint color put up on the walls by Larry Dattilo and Science and Operations Officer Ted Funk. Larry then cooked burgers on the grill and employees brought a dish to pass for a celebratory luncheon.

In August the rest of the building's interior was painted, replacing the old "government grey" wall color with a sky blue. The walls were adorned with fascinating weather-related pictures and posters, some of which were created by Louisville employees. Pam Lozier, Administrative Support Assistant, did an excellent job finding affordable framing options for the wall hangings, staying well within the office budget.



A bit of chaos while preparing to paint



Goodbye grey...

### It's a Twister!

Bill Whitlock, our Electronic Systems Analyst, spent a great deal of effort building a five foot tall tornado machine. The machine spent over a week at our booth at the Kentucky State Fair, where it was a huge hit with both kids and adults alike. The machine spent some time at the Louisville Science Center as well, where it also was very popular.



Our own little tornado



The NWS Louisville booth at the Kentucky State Fair



"Wow...cool!"

### Outreach

In June Warning Coordination Meteorologist Norm Reitmeyer spoke to over a thousand bus drivers in Louisville. In April, Ted Funk and Meteorologist-in-Charge John Gordon spent the day in Bowling Green with Chris Allen of WBKO, Warren County EMA Director Ronnie Pearson, and meteorology students at Western Kentucky University. In May forecasters Mark Jarvis and Ben Schott gave three severe weather media seminar presentations in Louisville and Lexington.

## Spring, continued from page 2

with average monthly temperatures and departures from normal). A ridge across the lower Ohio Val-

ley brought unusually warm and dry weather the first three weeks of April, which allowed average

April monthly temperatures to register slightly above normal.

## MIC Summit

by John Gordon, Meteorologist-in-Charge

On May 2 and 3 NWS Louisville played host to the first-ever Kentucky MIC Summit. All bosses from the five NWS offices that serve Kentucky met for a day and a half to discuss a variety of coordination issues ranging from NOAA Weather Radio to *StormReady* to electronics. The summit was attended by Beverly Poole

of Paducah, Shawn Harley of Jackson, Ken Haydue of Wilmington OH, Alan Rezek of Charleston WV, and John Gordon of Louisville.

The meeting started off with a two-hour briefing to General Clay Bailey, head of the Kentucky State Emergency Management Agency. Forecaster Chris Smallcomb gave General Bailey a demonstration of how our on-line point-and-click

forecasts are generated. General Bailey offered, "I use this web page every day and I like it, especially when you have time discriminators of precipitation in the first couple of days."

The briefing concluded with John Gordon and Service Hydrologist Mike Callahan explaining NOAA Weather Radio, with which General Bailey was pleased.

## Lexington Legends

On August 2 NWS Louisville, which is responsible for Lexington area forecasts and warnings, had a lightning safety awareness booth at the Lexington Legends game in Applebee's Park. We gave away over five hundred lightning safety magnets and many people were impressed with our tornado machine and lightning posters. Forecaster Ben Schott received the honor of throwing out the first pitch.



Forecaster Ben Schott is ready for his pitching debut



Meteorologist-in-Charge John Gordon, on the air



Ben mans the NWS booth between scouting calls